



New Orleans printing company uses HP printers to sail through real and economic storms



HP customer case study: Crystal Clear Imaging uses HP large format printers to stand by its commitment to quality and value, and maintain its position as a leading provider of total signage solutions.

Industry: Graphic Services/Printing

HP Scitex XL1500 Printer used to print signage for stadium, while under hurricane conditions

Since it was founded almost a decade ago, Crystal Clear Imaging, headquartered in New Orleans, Louisiana, has established itself as an industry leader in the major sports event business. Building on its commitment to the success of every project – from professional consultation, to creative conceptualization, and expert execution – Crystal Clear Imaging has emerged as a highly-successful total signage solutions specialist. In 2008, the company shifted most of its production to large format HP printers, vastly expanding its capabilities in terms of applications and volume.

Crystal Clear Imaging's commitment to the success of every job has seen it through some very (literally) stormy times. After Hurricane Katrina, the company worked around the clock to produce the signage for the refurbished Superdome, which reopened in 2006.

In 2008, despite the evacuation of most of New Orleans during Hurricane Gustav, Crystal Clear Imaging created all of the signage for the Saints football stadium in time for the first game after the storm.

Arthur Boisfontaine, Managing Partner of Crystal Clear Imaging, recalls: "We were printing in a ghost town with a partial staff and limited resources. We managed to finish just hours before the game. It was the first game after Hurricane Katrina and there was a lot of emotion. It was a very unusual kind of feeling."

This impressive achievement was facilitated by a combination of company commitment and the speed of the HP Scitex XL1500 Printer. Using this super-wide format printer together with the HP Scitex XL1500 DS Upgrade Kit and a heat transfer machine, Crystal Clear Imaging was able to produce 1220 linear meters (4000 ft) of banners on Enviro-Tex 9499 Firesafe material in a record ten days.



"We printed most of the signage for the Louisiana Superdome, home of the New Orleans Saints, on the HP Scitex XL1500 Printer, in only 10 days – and during Hurricane Gustav, when we had almost no staff. It was an amazing accomplishment and feeling!"

- Arthur Boisfontaine, Managing Partner, Crystal Clear Imaging



HP printers accelerate business growth even during economic downturn

Crystal Clear Imaging depends on several HP printers to print a wide range of high resolution POS banners, dye sub fabric banners, mesh banners, backlit flexface banners (mainly for sports stadiums), building wraps, and more.

Its most recent HP acquisition, the HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer, was a highly strategic decision that followed an extensive study of the market. "We conducted a study of what equipment would put us in the best position to withstand the economic downturn," explains Boisfontaine. "We discovered that the speed of the HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer was phenomenal and the ink savings unbelievable. We realized that by purchasing this machine, we could shut down at least two other machines and significantly save on resources."

As early as two months after installing the printer in October 2008, Crystal Clear Imaging had already gained important business benefits. "The HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer enables us to produce larger jobs in less time, thereby increasing customer confidence and loyalty," says Boisfontaine. It enables beautiful printing quality on

backlit jobs using much more cost-effective backlit media. Instead of \$1.40 per square foot, the cost is now only 30 cents per square foot. I calculated that we previously spent \$20,000 on backlit media over six months. Now, with the HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer, the same amount of media will only cost between three and four thousand dollars."

"Our philosophy is that buying this machine was a necessity for survival during the downturn. With these savings, we can position ourselves so that instead of running higher volumes and using fewer employees, we can maintain the same number of employees and channel them into new areas, diversify and grow. In summary, I'm looking at overall cost, speed, and quality - and I'm getting everything with the HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer."

Increased capacity means increased revenue

With its new printer, Crystal Clear Imaging's capacity has increased tenfold, providing ample room to grow and develop business. In the words of Mr. Boisfontaine: "That was one of the advantages of buying the HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer. We were printing a ton of work and

working round-the-clock. Then we bought this printer and even though our workload remained the same, we now feel like we're hardly working at all. We can print a full bus wrap in half an hour instead of a full day - and the quality is great!"

"We've put ourselves in a different position and can now offer customers significantly increased production capacity. Typically, customers prefer not to put all their eggs in one basket, but once they try us and we get the job done so quickly, they come back to us for their remaining projects, instead of spreading them out amongst different printers."

Continued partnership with HP

Crystal Clear Imaging sees HP digital printing solutions as an integral part to its ability to maintain its position as a market leader in graphic design and printing, particularly in the sports arena.

"Even with the economy slowing down, sports carry on. They may be playing at a lower margin but the budgets are larger and HP gives us more earning possibility."



"The HP machines have enabled us to expand into the sports business, which involves printing on fire-safe fabric at high production speeds. Now, with my HP machines, if I sign a big contract with a sports team, I can handle anything they ask for."

- Arthur Boisfontaine, Managing Partner,
Crystal Clear Imaging

At a glance

Industry sector:

Graphic Services/Printing

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Objectives:

- Stay ahead during economic downturn by diversifying offering, channeling resources into new areas, growing business, and reducing costs.
- Increase customer confidence and meet new market requirements by printing larger jobs in less time.
- Increase margins by moving to textile printing.

Approach:

- HP Scitex XL1500 Printer for production of high resolution POS, mesh and flexface banners and building wraps. Uses same printer, with the HP Scitex XL1500 DS Upgrade Kit, for fabric banners.
- HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer for cost-effective, high-speed and high-quality printing on cost-efficient backlit media materials.
- HP Designjet 10000s Printer for POS banners on varied fabrics.

Business benefits:

- HP Scitex XL1500 Printer with the HP Scitex XL1500 DS Upgrade Kit facilitates expansion into major sports event business by enabling production of signage on fire-safe fabric as required for stadium signage.
- HP Scitex TJ8300 Printer reduces overall costs and increases printing speed and quality – enabling Crystal Clear Imaging to strategically reposition itself for survival and growth during economic downturn.
- Time and resource savings and ability to complete large-scale projects within tight deadlines enable Crystal Clear to increase its share of customers' print spending.

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